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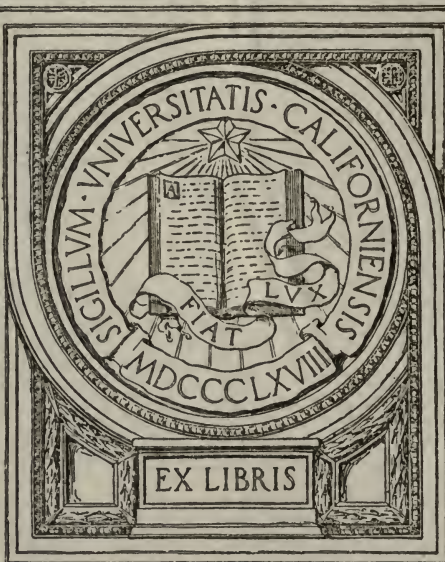
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# THE CHINESE CONQUEST OF SONGARIA.

BY

CH. DENBY, JR.

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It is exceedingly difficult for a western reader to take a deep interest in a narrative of the warlike deeds of China's heroes. A feat of strategy, a midnight march to the rescue of a beleaguered city, a desperate defence against fearful odds, in fact any military achievement, and the history of China tells manyfit subjects for a minstrel's lay, lose their charm for us when we hear that *Chang*, or *Tso*, or *Tsai* was the hero of the occasion. The march of a band of Mongol cavalry across the rugged passes of the T'ien Shan, riding two hundred miles a day, nourishing themselves with a mouthful of blood sucked from the veins of the steeds they rode, and gaining a victory over a surprised and unsuspecting foe, were it in the annals of any other nation, would excite the enthusiasm of us all. Let the Chinese, the Manchu and the Mongol armies fight as they will, let them conquer Asia and knock with victorious arms at the gates of Europe, their deeds for us are like those of beings of another planet. The victories of Napoleon under the shadow of the pyramids, the conquests of England's armies on the plains of India, the march of American volunteers across the states of the Confederacy need fear no Asiatic rivalry.

And why? Is it because of names? Should Ulysses change his name to *Ma*, Hector to *Liao* and Aeneas to *Huo* would their

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feats of valor lose sensibly their charm for us?

Whatever the reason, there is some inevitable difficulty, and everyone who has attempted to put Chinese history into attractive English has been wrecked upon it.

My attempt to translate a little book of the last century, the Hsi-Yü Wen-chien-lu, which is the basis of this paper, proved no exception to the rule (1). The gaps in the narrative, the omission of explanations necessary to an understanding of the story have necessitated a frequent appeal to other books and leave this essay rough and disconnected.

With these few words in anticipation of criticism, I will attempt to give an account of Songaria and its conquest by K'ien Lung.

Wang Wei, a Chinese poet of the seventh century, says: "He who travels westward through Yang Kuan finds no longer friends (2)".

This line expresses the ideas of the Chinese for many centuries on the dangerous and inhospitable character of the vast territories to their north and west. It is difficult for us, in the light of modern geographical research, familiar with the journeys of Russian and English explorers, to form a conception of the views the Chinese had of the dangers of the desert of Gobi.

Through Chia Yü Kuan, the westernmost gate of the Great Wall, passed the highway which southwards led into Shensi and the Middle Kingdom. Northwards it led to the Chinese fortresses of Yang Kuan and Yü Mên Kuan, across the desert through

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(1). 西域聞見錄, published in the year 1777 by Ch'un Yuan 椿園

(2). Wang Wei 王維 A. D. 699-759—A poet of the T'ang Dynasty. 西出陽關無故人 Yang Kuan was four days journey west of Sha Chou.

several ancient cities to the passes of the Tsung-ling Mountains and the mysterious lands of Central Asia. To go out of this pass was to leave friends and home and civilization and to enter into a land of which no tale too exaggerated could be told. Here the beasts were of fabulous size and mankind either more or less than human. It was through this pass that one reached the famous Kuen-lun mountains, the favorite arena for the monsters, fairies, genii and other beings of Chinese legends, "the Olympus", as Williams says, "where the Buddhist and Taoist divinities hold their mystic sway, strange voices are heard and marvels accomplished" (1).

Even after the conquests of the Emperor Han Wu Ti, which greatly extended Chinese geographical knowledge, the desert retained the reputation of a haunted waste. The travels of the early Buddhist pilgrims between China and India take on a character of greater intrepidity and deeper devotion, if looked at in the knowledge of sixteen hundred years ago. Fa Hien, a Buddhist monk who, in the fourth century, visited India to obtain copies of the Books of Discipline, says that when he left T'un-hwang he came to a desert in which there were many evil demons and hot winds. "Though you look all round" he says, "most earnestly to find where you can cross, you know not where to make your choice, the only mark and indication being the dry bones of the dead" (2). Hwen Thsang, another Buddhist pilgrim, speaks of troops marching and halting with gleaming arms and waving banners, the imagery of demons, and of a voice which called behind him "fear not! fear not!" (3). Marco Polo himself,

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(1) Williams' Middle Kingdom, Vol. I p. 12.

(2) The Travels of Fa Hien, Legge p. 12.

(3) Yule's Marco Polo, Vol. I p. 205.

who crossed the desert in the thirteenth century, speaks of the spirits of the desert. "When travellers are on the move by night" he says "and one of them chances to lag behind or to fall asleep or the like, when he tries to gain his company again he will hear spirits talking, and will suppose them to be his comrades. Sometimes the spirits will call him by name; and thus shall a traveller oftentimes be led astray so that he never finds his party. And in this way many have perished" (1). Gilmour, in his "Among the Mongols", mentions the wonderful deceptions of Gobi (2). Stones presented themselves to him as houses and camels while real tents, herds and people seemed to spring magically from the wilderness.

Separated by such a barrier from Ili and the countries north of India, it is not strange that fuller knowledge of the countries to the west did not prevail among the Chinese of the early centuries of our era, but rather more remarkable that they so widely extended their influence thither.

During the reign of the Emperor Han Wu Ti (140 B. C.), we have the first definite mention of these hitherto unknown lands. The books of the Han Dynasty—the Han Shu—immortalize the first Chinese who made an extensive excursion through the Chia Yü Kuan. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B. C. Chang K'ien (3), spoken of by ancient historians as he who "pierced the void", was sent on a mission to the Yueh Ti or Getae, known to us as the Goths. Taken prisoner by the Hsiung-nu, he lived many years among them. Being at length released, he was sent on a mission to Ta Yuan Kuo, the Fergana of today, then a dependency of Persia.

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(1) Yule's Marco Polo, Vol. I p. 207.

(2) Chap. 5.

(3) Mayers' Chinese Reader's Manual, 18



From here he brought to China the grape and the art of making wine from its juice. Subsequently he was sent to Hsi Yü — the present Turkistan — to negotiate treaties with the countries there “By B. C. 115”, (says Mayers in the Chinese Reader's Manual), “a regular intercourse with the thirty-six states of this region had become established through his efforts”. To him also is attributed the discovery of the source of the Yellow River, previously believed to be a continuation of the Milky Way.

A few years later General Li Kuang Li (1) marched at the head of a large army against Ta Yuan Kuo to enforce the payment of a tribute of horses. Notwithstanding an immense loss of life in the passage of his army across the trackless wastes of Central Asia, his expedition was successful. Three years later he effected the conquest of Ta Yüan and was ennobled by the Emperor with the title of Marquis of the Western Sea. He ended his career by fleeing from China, to avoid execution for conspiracy against the Emperor, and joined the Hsiung-nu.

The intercourse thus established between China and the countries of western Asia was maintained with occasional interruptions for many centuries. We find the Parthians known to them as An-si. From the 5<sup>th</sup> Century of our era Persia is referred to in Chinese books as Po-sz, from which country many embassies came to China. The rise of Islamism is almost contemporaneous with the T'ang dynasty — China's Elizabethan age. The T'angshu relate embassies of the Califs to the Chinese court in the seventh and eighth centuries. The History of the Sung mentions twenty embassies from Arabia to China during the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries (2). All the Mohammedan records of intercourse, however,

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(1) Chinese Reader's Manual, 350.

(2) Mediaeval Researches. Bretschneider vol. I p. 266.

cannot be fully credited, as several works, with characteristic Chinese inaccuracy, refer to Mohammedanism and its introduction into China at dates anterior to Mohammed's having entered on his mission in Arabia (1).

During the Mongol dynasty many Chinese statesmen, connected with the court of Chinghiz Kaan (2), made extensive journeys in the west and some of them have left admirable accounts of the countries that they visited. Most prominent among these is the Sage Ch'ang Chun, author of the *Si Yü Ki*.

It was reserved for the Manchu Emperor K'ien Lung, however, to effect the permanent conquest of Ili and other countries of the west and to definitely annex them to Chinese dominions. "Outside of Chia Yü Kuan" says Ch'ün Yuan, author of the book referred to in the introduction to this paper, "for a thousand *li* there is nothing but sand and gravel, without water or grass or smoke from the abode of man. So it has been from the earliest times".

Further on across this desert, however, as we know from other sources, on both sides of the mountains known in Chinese books as the Celestial or Snow Mountains, are the two fertile vallies of Kashgaria on the south and Songaria on the north, called, since their annexation by K'ien Lung, the Northern and the Southern Circuits. Kashgaria is also known on maps as Little Bokhara and Chinese Turkistan.

By the Chinese Kashgar is called *Ka-shih-la-erh* and the Mohammedans of the Southern Circuit were known generally to the Chinese as *Ka-shih-la-erh* Mohammedans, so great was the

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(1) *Mediaeval Researches*, Vol. I p. 266.

(2) For the distinction between *kaan*, as the title of the supreme sovereign of the Mongols, and *khan*, as applied generally to Tartar chiefs whether sovereign or not, see Col. Yule's *Marco Polo*, Vol. . p. 9.

fame of the city. Chün Yuan says that *Ka-shih* means *every color* and *la-erh* means *brick houses* and that the name refers to the many various colored brick houses in Kashgar.

Ili is now, and for many centuries has been, the site of many flourishing cities as Hami, Aksu, Yarkand, Kashgar in the south, and Kuldja, or Hui Yuan Ch'eng, in the north. The population seems to have undergone frequent and violent changes and presents today a curious blending of nationalities and religions. They have had every form of Central Asian rule and misrule — the freedom of migratory tribes, khans of their own election, Mohammedan conquerors from Samarkand, Manchu Emperors at Peking, Mongol khans at Almalik and part of them for a time the Czar of Russia. With a fertile soil aided by a system of irrigation bequeathed from an ancient past the people seem to have flourished, notwithstanding change of masters, and Ili is from all accounts today the most desirable part of Central Asia (1).

Songaria, the Northern Circuit, called by the Chinese Chün-la-erh, is that part of Ili with which this narrative is chiefly concerned. It is bounded on the south by the T'ien Shan, west by Russian territory, north by the Altai range of Mountains and east by the desert. It is watered throughout its length by the river Ili, flowing from east to west, and by its tributaries. The country is interlaced with irrigation canals which derive their water from these streams. The soil is fertile, producing fine crops of wheat, millet, peaches, apples, melons, apricots and many other fruits and grains. Przewalsky speaks of the abundance of apple and apricot trees in a wild state on the northern slope of the T'ien Shan Mountains, producing excellent fruit (2). In

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(1) Schuyler's Turkistan, Vol. II p. 198.

(2) Mediaeval Researches, Vol. I p. 17 note 18.

autumn, he says, the soil of the forest is covered with it.

The name Songaria, by which this valley was known until its occupation by the Chinese, dates back to the seventh century. It was then occupied by a Turkish tribe, at that time in possession of Central Asia, which had divided into two tribes or divisions, known as the *Jungar*, or Eastern Division, and the *Borongar*, or Western Division. (1) When the dominion of this latter came to an end the name of the Western Division disappeared with it. The name Jun-gar remained, however, and the country became known as Songaria.

The earliest inhabitants of this country seem to have been a people called the Szu. Adjoining them on the east, occupying pastures on China's northwestern border, north of Tibet, was another numerous people, known to the Chinese as the Yueh Ti, who have been identified as the Goths. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B. C. they were driven westward by the terrible Hsiung-nu (2) — sometimes mistakenly identified with the Huns — the warlike tribes against whom Shih Hwang-ti, the founder of the Ch'in dynasty, waged successful wars and to whose incursions China owes the erection of the Great Wall. Under this pressure the Yueh Ti emigrated to the valley of the Ili, displacing the Szu who, in turn, fell upon Central Asia. Before many years another movement of these nomad swarms took place, caused also by the Hsiung-nu, and another tribe known to us as the Usun, identified by many scholars with the ancestors of the Teutonic Race (3); were driven to the Ili and the shores of Lake Balkash. The

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(1) Schuyler's Turkistan, Vol. II p. 166.

(2) In Mediaeval Researches, Vol. I p. 203, the author states that the Hsiung-nu cannot be identified with the Huns. The Huns only appear in history about A. D. 375, while in A. D. 216 the power of the Hsiung-nu was completely broken.

(3) Schuyler's Turkistan, Vol II p. 164.



Yueh Ti and the Szu were precipitated, a veritable barbarian inundation, in a resistless flood upon the vallies of the Oxus and Jaxartes. To this advance of barbarous tribes, taking its origin in far Eastern Asia, was due the overthrow of the Bactrian Kingdom founded in Central Asia by the successors of Alexander (1). It is supposed that the cause of these migrations may be found in Shih Hwang-ti's campaigns against the Hsiung-nu and his conquests over them (2).

Songaria was, from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, under the control of Turkish tribes. During this epoch there existed in the valley of the Ili the celebrated city of Almalik, home of Persian and of Mongol princes, the site as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> century of a Latin Bishopric and a Nestorian See. Ch'ang Ch'un states that he stopped at Almalik on Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> 1221. He says "We stopped at a fruit orchard west (of the city). The people here call a fruit *a-li-ma* and as the city is famed for its fruits, the city received the above name". The *a-li-ma* is the apple, in Persian *alma*. Ch'ang Ch'un also speaks of cloth woven from *vegetable wool*. "This hair", he says, "resembles the down (enclosing the seeds) of our willows. It is very clean, fine and soft; and they use it for making thread, ropes, cloth and wadding" (3). This was cotton, at that time very slightly known in China.

The Chinese statesman Yeh-lu-Ch'u-tsai, who accompanied Chinghiz Kaan in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and left a record of his conquests, refers to this city under the name of A-li-ma (4), west of which he states was the river Ili.

In the early part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Songaria fell under the

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(1). Journey to the Source of the Oxus, Introduction XXXI.

(2). Lectures on the Science of Language, Max Müller Vol. I p. 346.

(3). Mediaeval Researches, Vol. I p. 70.

(4). Notes on Chinese Mediaeval Travellers to the West.



sway of Chinghiz Kaan. On the partition of his kingdoms at his death it was allotted to his second son, Jagatai, who set up his court at the city of Almalik, near whose high mountains, as Persian historians state, he loved to pass the summer.

During the 15<sup>th</sup> century this city was destroyed by the Mongols and Uzbeks. Its vast ruins, about twenty five miles northwest of Kuldja, are still pointed out to tourists. Songaria remained under Mongol rule until the invasion of Tamerlane, who, after laying it waste, made it part of his dominions. After this great confusion prevailed in the rule of the country. It was torn with dissensions between various Mongol princes and does not again come into prominence until the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. We then find it occupied by three powerful Mongol tribes, the Ch'oros, Khoshoit and Turguts. They had risen to some prominence while the descendants of the Great Kaan were still on the throne of China. After the successful Chinese rebellion, which resulted in the expulsion of the Mongols in 1366 and the seating of Hung-wu as first Ming Emperor, Ching Tsung, the 11<sup>th</sup> and last Mongol Emperor, fled to Mongolia.

The overthrow of the Mongols in China was absolute and complete. No such wiping out of a reigning people can be found anywhere in history. The last Mongol Emperor died in his retreat in the very year that the victorious Hung-wu ascended the throne. His successors dwindled into almost impotent khans and Mongolia became the prey of contending factions. The three tribes of Songaria above mentioned united themselves against all opponents under the name of the "Weirad" or "Confederates" and soon obtained a preponderating influence. A separation of the Ch'oros into two divisions made the allies four in number and they henceforward became known as the "Durben Weirad" or "Four

Allies", and brought all Mongolia under their influence (1).

They then seem to have formed the ambition to establish the descendants of Chinghiz Kaan on the throne of China, and waged an almost constant warfare against the early Ming Emperors.

In the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, owing to the tyranny of the head of the union, a dissension occurred among them, the discontented tribes going to settle in Siberia. "It is probable", says Schuyler in his *Turkistan*, "that it was at this time, on account of this secession from the confederacy, that they received from the Tartars and Kirghiz the name of Kalmyks, Kalmaks or Kalmuks, as *kalma*, *kalmak* and *kalmalik* in the East Turkic dialects mean "remnant", "remaining", "rest". (2).

According to the *Hsi Yü Wên Chien Lu*, it was at this epoch that a small band of Turguts left Songaria and went to settle on the Volga, to return one hundred and seventy years later to offer themselves as subjects of K'ien Lung. The return of this tribe, then numerous and powerful, has been immortalized by De Quincey in his essay, "The Flight of a Tartar Tribe." This journey across the Kirghiz steppe, through the midst of their enemies has been characterized by Williams as "one of the most remarkable instances of nomadic wanderings and unexampled sufferings in modern times" (3). The Chinese account in the *Hsi Yü Wen Chien Lu* details the submission of the Turguts, as the author calls their return, as follows.

The Turguts were a small and insignificant tribe living in Songaria, or Ili, and were vassals of the Songares. They were

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(1) Schuyler's *Turkistan*, II, p. 165.

(2) Vol. II p. 166.

(3) *Middle Kingdom*, Vol. I p. 234.

oppressed and ill-treated by the kahn of the Songares, it is briefly stated, and resolved to flee to Russia. The date of their departure is given as seven generations, about 170 years, before the date of their famous return, or about 1600. With their small possessions and scanty herds of cattle they made their way to the Russian boundary. By order of the Czar they were well received and granted a large tract of land on both banks of the river Volga. Here they enjoyed peace and soon became a flourishing and populous tribe. After the Chinese conquest of Ili in 1756, the scattered remnants of three tribes from Ili, the Turbets and others, under the leadership of a man called She-leng, fearful of extermination by the Chinese, fled to Russia to join the Turguts. Here they settled down under the control of the khan of the Turguts and engaged in pastoral pursuits.

Frequent large levies of troops had been made amongst this people by the Russian Government in past time, and of the soldiers furnished by them eighty or ninety thousand are said to have been killed. Now a rumor arose, which seems to have been started by the newly arrived tribes, that a further conscription was to be made and that every male of sixteen years of age and over was to be pressed into the service. Great excitement and uneasiness prevailed amongst the people. They had already lost many thousands in Russian wars and attributed to their rulers designs for their destruction. Finally a council of nobles and headmen was called and, at the suggestion of She-leng, it was decided to return to Ili as soon as cold weather had set in and the rivers were frozen.

Accordingly on the 33<sup>rd</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> Moon, of the 25<sup>th</sup> year of K'ien Lung (1771), with their khan at their head and the

fugitive tribes as guides, the Turguts 460,000 families in number, accompanied by vast herds of horses and cattle, set out for Ili. Before starting they murdered 1000 Russians living amongst them and on their way attacked and destroyed four fortified Russian towns. A Russian army was sent against them, but before it caught them they had left Russian territory and entered the mountains of Ili. Their sufferings now commenced. The cattle died in countless numbers for want of water and forage. The Kirghiz tribes followed them keeping up a destructive warfare day after day. The mountain tribes harassed them causing terrible havoc. Finally they came to the country of the Burut Mongols. This fierce tribe welcomed their approach, says the Hsi Yü Wen Chien Lu, as a dispensation of providence, and formed an army of thousands of horsemen for the purpose of pillage. The Turguts took refuge in almost inaccessible mountains. "Here for a thousand *li*", says the Wen Chien Lu, in a graphic description, "there was nothing but rugged mountains without water or grass. It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> moon and the weather was warm. They quenched their thirst with the blood of horses and cattle. A great pestilence broke out among them, spreading from one to another, from which 300,000 died. Of their cattle not three in ten remained. After ten days they fled like a wounded wolf, but the Buruts awaited them outside the mountain passes, attacking in front and rear, in large bodies and in scattered parties, pursuing, killing and robbing night and day".

Their loss in killed and prisoners, carried off as slaves, and in animals and property, taken from them in these few days, far exceeded the depredations of all their other enemies combined. Finally they came to the vicinity of a Chinese military station and the Buruts withdrew.



The Chinese military governor of Ili now sent officers to demand the intention of their arrival. After a conference of six or seven days, they replied that they had come to offer themselves as subjects of the Emperor of China. The khan was taken to an audience with the military governor, to whom he made splendid gifts of foreign guns, jade, clocks, porcelain, gold and other things. Among them was a jade seal, engraved with the seal character, which had been given to one of his ancestors by the Ming Emperor Yung Lo, in 1411.

Awaiting imperial orders they were located in Ili and well treated. The Emperor was delighted at their arrival. He sent the highest nobles of his court to receive them. The khan, Wa-pahsi, with his headmen and nobles were summoned to an audience at Jeho. Great honors, decorations and degrees of nobility were conferred on them all and abundant lands allotted to their people.

Staunton, then with Lord Macartney's Mission at Jeho, mentions attending a theatrical performance given by K'ien lung, at which were present "two Mussulmen, chiefs of some hordes of Calmoucks, who, not long since, on occasion of discontent or misunderstanding with the government of Russia, migrated in great numbers from the northern coast of the Caspian Sea into Chinese Tartary, and put themselves under the Emperor's protection. He gave them a very favorable reception, and decorated these two leaders with buttons of dignity, and peacocks' feathers to their caps" (1).

It would be difficult to imagine a more interesting encounter than this of the Mohammedan khan of the Turguts, just arrived from such a remarkable journey, with the embassy of an English

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(1) Staunton's Embassy, part II p. 93.



king at the court of the Manchu Emperor of China at his summer palace at Jeho.

To return to the history of the Weirad, after this secession, the khans of the confederacy seem to have increased in power. In the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, under "the Galdan", a ruler of great ability, Tashkent and other cities of central Asia were included in Songarian dominions. In pursuit of the ambition of his predecessors to create an empire like that of Chinghiz, this khan waged a war against the Kalka Mongols, who were under Chinese protection, and forced them to take refuge in Chinese territory. During his absence upon this expedition, his nephew, Tsevan Rabdan, raised a revolt. It was an easy matter to obtain the assistance of the Emperor K'ang Hsi. With the help of Chinese armies, Tsevan deposed his uncle and seated himself on the throne.

Though the Manchus made no attempt to take possession of the country, the downfall of the Weirad khans was foreshadowed by the victories of K'ang Hsi. Tsevan, however, ruled with success and greatly extended his conquests toward the west. Many independent Mongol princes were brought into subjection to him and he levied tribute from "the cities of eastern Turkistan as well as Samarkand, Bukhara and even Balk", (1) in northern Afghanistan. A full account of his conquests, if it could be procured, would be full of interest. An empire, however temporary and uncertain it was, which extended from the northern boundaries of China on the east to Balkh, "the mother of cities" (2), on the west, and which included the vallies of the Oxus and Jaxartes and the tableland of Pamir — the roof of Asia perhaps the cradle of the Aryan race — is a proof of the power to

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(1) Schuyler's Turkistan, Vol. II p. 167.

(2) See Introduction to Wood's Journey to Source of the Oxus, p. XXVIII.

which Songaria had attained under Mongol rule.

Tsevan Rabdan appears in the Chinese account as Che-wang A-la-pu-tang. Upon his death he was succeeded by his son, who reigned eighteen years, and died in 1745, leaving three sons and a daughter. The succession at once became the subject of fierce dispute among them. The second son was chosen khan by the people. His first act was to put his younger brother to death and to attempt to submit the elder to a similar fate. In this he was unsuccessful and, on the contrary, the elder brother succeeded in having him assassinated and assumed the title of khan himself. A rebellion, headed by his sister's husband, at once arose but was suppressed with great bloodshed. His sister and her husband were made prisoners and promptly executed.

This khan — whose name in Chinese was La-ma-ta-la-cha — was now securely seated in power. The bloody acts which had marked his succession, though common to every change of rulers in Central Asia, were of such an extraordinary cruelty as to arouse a deep feeling of discontent among his people.

Among the subjects of the khan were two ambitious chieftains, Tawachi and Amursana, each having several thousand followers. They resolved to profit by the spirit of revolt manifested to attempt to set up an independent khanate. “The family of Tawachi” says the Chinese historian, “was held in the highest consideration but he himself was without ability, while Amursana was of obscure origin but excelled all the other Mohammedan chiefs in craftiness and treachery”. Amursana's ambition had the additional incentive of a hereditary hatred against the ancestors of the khan, by whom his grandfather, a Tibetan, had been treacherously murdered during a Songarian expedition against Tibet.

In a battle between the forces of the khan and the army of the allied chieftains the rebels were completely defeated. The two chiefs took refuge in hiding in the Kirghiz steppe but the khan, resolved upon their extermination, sent an army of 60,000 men marching westward night and day to search for them in all the Kirghiz villages. Tawachi, learning of the expedition was completely prostrated. He is said to have given himself up to tears and lamentations, regarding speedy death as certain. Amursana, with the boldness and resource which marked all his actions, formed his plans at once. Picking from his followers fifteen hundred of the bravest and best mounted men, he left the Kirghiz country and made his way southwards through precipitous and almost unknown passes. The country through which he travelled was an uninhabited desert. His men carried dried meat for food and their horses found sufficient grazing on the rugged mountain sides. To better avoid detection they encamped by day in secluded canons and pushed on at night. Arrived in Ili totally unexpected, he hastened with his followers in search of the Khan and slew him before his presence was suspected.

Amongst those tribes the loss of the leader was the loss of the cause. Amursana had little difficulty in recalling the forces sent against himself and Tawachi. Remembering his own base origin, he made his friend khan of Songaria and retired to his home near the T'ien Shan.

Tawachi's weakness of character made him dependent on Amursana in ruling Songaria. He frequently summoned him to come from his distant home and each summons was the occasion of an angry interview between them. Amursana constantly upbraided Tawachi for his weakness and his want of ability. At last bitter enmity rose between them and the Khan resolved to rid

himself of a troublesome if useful adviser. Alleging the cunning character of Amursana as a pretext for his destruction, a force was raised and sent against him. Resistance was useless, so Amursana, grasping at the only hope of safety, gathered his followers together and, without a show of resistance, fled to the city of K'uei Hua Ch'eng where he offered himself as a vassal to the Emperor K'ien-Lung.

This was in the 19<sup>th</sup> year of K'ienLung, 1755 of our calendar, and marks the downfall of Songaria.

Amursana was raised by K'ienLung to the rank of prince and a large army of Chinese, Manchu and Mongol troops, commanded by officers of exalted rank, was sent to his assistance. "It was an imposing force", says the Chinese account, "their banners covered the land. The Mohammedans of the villages on their way, with the lamas and officials at their head, advanced to offer submission, knocking their heads on the ground. Such was their haste they only seemed to fear to arrive too late".

Abandoned by his people the khan, Tawachi, offered no resistance. With his own immediate family, he fled to the mountains. Here, thinking to find a safe refuge with a beg who owed him many favors, he was seized by his friend and treacherously delivered over to the imperial troops.

The complete subjugation of Songaria followed. It was formed into a Chinese dependency with a Tartar-general, a military governor, government agents and all the officers of the Chinese colonial organization.

The Chinese, however, were doomed to have trouble with their former ally. The ambition of Amursana was far from satisfied with the subordinate position allotted to him. In leading the Emperor's forces into Ili he had hoped for nothing less than



the nomination as khan as the reward of his services. Finding that he was to occupy an inferior position he at once planned rebellion. No sooner had the main body of the Chinese forces marched back to China than he rose in arms, inducing the Mongol tribes to join him. The Chinese officials were slain even before their suspicions were aroused. The success of his revolt was brief, however. Imperial armies were sent against him by several roads and completely defeated he fled into Russia. He died of small-pox at Tobolsk, in 1757. It is a curious commentary on the relative power of China and Russia at that time that the Russians, then engaged in Turkish wars, conveyed the dead body of Amursana to Kiachta and gave it up to the Chinese as an inducement to peace (1).

The effects of this rebellion were disastrous and far reaching. The Songarians, restless under foreign rule, repeatedly attempted to throw off the Chinese yoke. At last, as Chün Yuan tersely expresses it, "the Emperor's anger was aroused. He commanded three Tartar-generals, each with several myriads of troops, to advance upon the Mohammedans by separate roads. They put more than a million to the sword. Those who escaped fled to the mountains but were hunted out by the officers and troops and all that were found were put to death. The few who remained became submissive subjects".

The immense number of slain in this massacre is confirmed by other authorities. Schuyler, who obtained his figures from some Russian source, says that the massacre was indiscriminate "so that while before the conquest there were in Jungaria 24 *uluses* with a population of 600.000 souls, at the end of 1756 not

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(1). Schuyler's Turkistan Vol. II p. 168.



one Jungarian remained, those who had not been killed having sought refuge among the Kirghiz or the Russians" (1). The Chinese historian's only comment on this incident is that Amursana's bad character brought these evils on his people. "Songaria had now become" he says, "entirely subject to China. Officers and troops were stationed in various places, military colonies founded and a lieut-Tartar-general stationed in Ili to keep peace on the borders".

In short the thorough remodeling of Songaria on a Chinese basis was undertaken, evincing K'ien Lung's intention of retaining the new territory which he had acquired force of arms.

A rebellion arising in the territory south of the T'ien Shan led to his conquest of Kashgar and all Eastern Turkistan. The history of this uprising by the Mohammedans of Yarkand under the leadership of two brothers, the two Hojeks Pu-la-tan and Huo-chi-chan, is of a very interesting character. They managed to involve in their plans the cities of Ku-che, Khoten, Kashgar and Yarkand and nearly all the Mohammedan population of Turkistan. All the Southern Circuit readily fell under their sway and several Chinese expeditions sent against them were met and destroyed. The city of Ku-che, on the southern slope of the T'ien Shan, became the headquarters of the rebels. A large Chinese army was sent against them here. The rebels despatched a force to intercept the Chinese troops in the mountain roads leading to the city. It was entirely defeated however by the imperial forces in a battle which lasted all day, and six thousand rebels were slain.

Disheartened, the whole rebel army retreated within the city,

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(1). Vol. II p. 168.

which was strongly fortified with earthworks that cannon could not penetrate. Here they underwent a siege of many weeks. The story of this siege is told in great detail in the *Wen Chien Lu*. Open attack being useless and the fortifications impregnable, under-ground mines were resorted to. These were discovered by the besieged and, by means of counter-mines, were flooded, with great loss to the besiegers. Finally, provisions being exhausted, the defenders made their escape at night with a long train of camels and fled to Aksu. The flight was suspected by the Mongol allies of the Chinese who heard the cries of the camels being loaded for the journey. They reported at once to the general, who was drinking and playing chess in his tent. He refused to believe them and would not authorize a pursuit. This conduct was reported to the Emperor and by imperial command he was taken a prisoner to Peking and executed.

The rebels were refused admission at Aksu. A similar experience met them at Wushih so they continued their flight to Yarkand. Here Huo-chi-chan raised another large army and kept the pursuing forces at bay for several months. At one time he cut the Chinese army into two parts and kept them so surrounded with his cavalry that, though only a few miles apart, each division was ignorant of the fate of the other for more than thirty days. Finally, however, they effected a junction and he was driven into the city.

The Tartar-general left him besieged within the city and devoted himself to the subjection of the cities and villages of the surrounding country, a task which was easily effected. When Huo-chi-chan heard that his great stronghold, the city of Kashgar, had capitulated he gave up all hope of resistance and fled with only a few thousand men to Khoten. Pursued thither he engaged in a last desperate battle for the defence of the city. It was a one-

sided contest, however, and when his most courageous officer was killed in single combat with a Solon Mongol, Huo-chi-chan's spirit was broken and he gave up hope.

Unable to offer further resistance he and his brother, with a few followers, determined on flight to Badakshan, hoping to make their way thence into India. The khan of Badakshan met them, however, with an armed force. The rebels were completely routed. Huo-chi-chan and his brother were both slain and their heads, together with their wagons and all the spoils of their army, were sent as a tribute to China.

This brought to an end a war of two years duration, which had caused great trouble and loss to China and had inflicted immense injury on the Mohammedan nations. The slain in battle numbered many thousands while the massacre of the inhabitants was the sequel to the capture of every city. At the taking of Kuche one thousand Mohammedan soldiers were made prisoners and all, with their families, were buried alive.

The history of the repression of rebellions among their Mohammedan subjects by the Chinese Emperors is marked by great cruelty and an utter disregard of human life. It must be said, however, that such has been the character of warfare among the tribes and nations of Central Asia from the beginning of history. It seems to be inherent in the nature of these people to be restless under any control, and to be always ready for revolt. Chün Yuan expresses a low estimate of their character. He says "The Mohammedan disposition is suspicious, and disorderly conduct is easily instigated. In days of peace if the begs and ahoons daily meet together, some deliberations of an unusual character are sure to be entered into in which the multitude will acquiesce. If they do not it is a mark of want of ability".

The Chinese understand thoroughly their character, and the Chinese policy of violence has found an imitator in no less distinguished a military authority than the Russian General Skobelev. In his campaigns against the Turkmans, Genl. Skobelev did not hesitate to advocate the advantage for future peace of a great victory followed by relentless slaughter.

On the subsequent history of Songaria this paper will not enter. Its conquest by Yakub Khan, its temporary falling into Russian hands and its reconquest by China are pages of modern history. Nor will its future be here discussed. Recent events in Central Asia lead us, however, to believe that the history of Songaria is not finished. The thoughtful words of Col. Yule, written twenty five years ago, seem written for to day. "The future is with God. Of the clouds that are gathering around the World's horizon China has its share. The empire which has a history coeval with the oldest of Chaldaea seems to be breaking up. It has often broken up before and been reconsolidated; it has often been conquered, and has either thrown off the yoke or absorbed its conquerors. But *they* derived what civilization they possessed from the land which they invaded. The internal combustions which are now heaving the soil come in contact with new and alien elements of Western origin. Who can guess what shall come of that chemistry?" (1)



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(1) Preface to "Cathay and the Way thither" pp. VII VIII.



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